



# **Audit of the Superior Court of California, County of Solano**

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MARCH 2026



Judicial Council of California

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**Superior Court of California, County of Solano**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Government Code, sections 77206(g) and 77009(h) provide the Judicial Council of California (Judicial Council) with the authority to inspect and review superior court records and to perform audits, reviews, and investigations of superior court operations. The Judicial Council's Office of Audit Services (Audit Services) periodically conducts performance audits of the superior courts in order to verify their compliance with the Judicial Council's policies and with state law. These audits are primarily focused on assisting the courts identify which of their practices, if any, can be improved upon to better promote sound business practices and to demonstrate accountability for their spending of the public's funds.

### **Summary of Audit Results**

Our audit found that the Superior Court of California, County of Solano (Court) demonstrated compliance with some of the Judicial Council's requirements evaluated during the audit. Table 1 on the next page presents a summary of the audit's results.

The Court demonstrated adherence to some of the different compliance requirements evaluated during the audit, as shown in Table 1. In particular, the Court demonstrated good compliance in the area of reporting year-end encumbrances. Specifically, our review found that the Court's encumbrances reported at fiscal year-end were properly supported.

However, our audit did identify six reportable audit findings where we believe the Court should consider taking corrective action to improve its operations and more fully comply with the Judicial Council's policies. These six findings are identified in Table 1 under the column "Reportable Findings" and include reference numbers indicating where the reader can view in further detail the specific findings and the Court's perspective.

One particular area of focus for the Court as it considers opportunities for improvement should include strengthening control over its change funds. Specifically, the Court does not require someone to count and verify the change funds at the end of each day while in the presence of a manager or supervisor, nor document the counts and verifications. Additionally, the Court does not require an individual who is not the change fund custodian to periodically count the change funds. As a result, the Court risks not knowing for an extended period of time if one of its change funds is short funds. The Court indicated it agreed with our finding and recommendation in this area and that corrective action was taken in July 2025.

Table 1 – Audit Results At A Glance – California Superior Court, County of Solano

Areas and Sub-Areas Subject to Review		Tested	Reportable Audit Findings		
			# of Findings	Finding Reference(s)	Court's View
<b>Cash Handling</b>					
1	Daily Opening Process	Yes	✓		
2	Voided Transactions	Yes	✓		
3	Manual Receipts	Yes	1	2025-3-01	Agrees
4	Mail Payments	Yes	✓		
5	Internet Payments	Yes	✓		
6	Change Fund	Yes	1	2025-6-01	Agrees
7	End-Of-Day Balancing and Closeout	Yes	1	2025-7-01	Agrees
8	Bank Deposits	Yes	1	2025-8-01	Agrees
9	Other Internal Controls	Yes	1	2025-9-01	Agrees
<b>Procurement and Contracts</b>					
10	Procurement Initiation	N/A	-		
11	Authorization & Authority Levels	N/A	-		
12	Competitive Procurements	N/A	-		
13	Non-Competitive Procurements	N/A	-		
14	Leveraged Purchase Agreements	N/A	-		
15	Contract Terms	N/A	-		
16	Other Internal Controls	N/A	-		
<b>Payment Processing</b>					
17	3-Point Match Process	N/A	-		
18	Payment Approval & Authority Levels	N/A	-		
19	Special Rules - In-Court Service Providers	N/A	-		
20	Special Rules - Court Interpreters	N/A	-		
21	Other Items of Expense	N/A	-		
22	Jury Expenses	N/A	-		
23	Travel Expense Claims	Yes	✓		
24	Business-Related Meals	Yes	✓		
25	Allowable Costs	N/A	-		
26	Other Internal Controls	N/A	-		
<b>Fund Balance</b>					
27	Year-End Encumbrances	Yes	✓		
28	Use of "Held on Behalf" Funds	N/A	-		
<b>JBSIS Case Filing Data</b>					
29	Validity of JBSIS Data	Yes	1	2025-29-01	Agrees

Source: Auditor generated table based on testing results and court management's perspective.

Note: Areas subjected to testing are generally based on requirements in the Trial Court Financial Policies and Procedures Manual, the Judicial Branch Contracting Manual, or California Rules of Court, but may also include other Judicial Council policies and directives. Areas not tested are based on audit determinations—such as area was not applicable, recently reviewed by others, or no transactions were selected to review—which are described more fully in the Audit Scope and Methodology section of the report. Applicable criteria are cited in each audit finding (as referenced above) in the body of our report. The Judicial Council's audit staff determine the scope of each audit based on their professional judgment and the needs of the Judicial Council, while also providing courts with an opportunity to highlight additional areas for potential review depending on available audit resources.

**Summary Perspective of Court Officials**

Audit Services initiated its audit of the Court on March 26, 2025, and completed its fieldwork in November 2025. Audit Services shared the draft findings with the Court starting on June 25, 2025, and received the Court's final official responses on August 4, 2025. The Court agreed with the findings, and its specific responses are included in the body of the report after each finding.

**Report Distribution**

The Judicial Council's *Advisory Committee on Audits and Financial Accountability for the Judicial Branch* reviewed this report on March 12, 2026, and approved it for public release.

**Audit Staff**

This audit was completed by the following staff under the general supervision of Dawn Tomita, Manager, CFE:

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## BACKGROUND ON THE COURT'S OPERATIONS

The Superior Court of California, County of Solano (Court) operates four court facilities in the cities of Fairfield and Vallejo. The Court operates under the authority and direction of the Presiding Judge, who is responsible for ensuring the effective management and administration of the Court, consistent with any rules, policies, strategic plan, and the funding provided by the Judicial Council.

California's 58 superior courts each have differing workloads, staffing levels, and financial resources. They operate under a decentralized system of governance and are each responsible for their own local court operations and business decisions. The Presiding Judge has the authority to: develop a local budget and allocate the funding provided by the Judicial Council; approve procurements and contracts; and authorize the Court's expenditures. The information in Table 2 is intended to provide the reader with context and perspective on the Court's relative size and workload compared to averages of all 58 superior courts.

Table 2 – Statistical Data for Solano Superior Court and Average of all Superior Courts

Statistic	Solano Superior Court	Average of All Superior Courts				
		Cluster 1 Courts	Cluster 2 Courts	Cluster 3 Courts	Cluster 4 Courts	All 58 Courts
<b>Financial Highlights (Fiscal Year 2024-25)</b>						
Total Revenue	\$ 37,581,856	\$ 3,260,301	\$ 15,139,585	\$ 58,843,696	\$ 294,069,270	\$ 60,336,165
Total Expenditures	\$ 38,151,013	\$ 3,392,072	\$ 15,338,135	\$ 59,487,412	\$ 301,294,837	\$ 61,586,467
Staff Salaries & Benefits As a % of Total Expenditures	\$ 31,294,104 82.0%	\$ 2,236,498 65.9%	\$ 11,410,944 74.4%	\$ 43,963,602 73.9%	\$ 232,652,777 77.2%	\$ 46,850,643 76.1%
<b>Judicial Officers and Staff (2025 Court Statistics Report)</b>						
Judges	20	2	8	30	144	30
Commissioners/Referees	3	-	1	4	21	4
Non-Judicial Staff (approx.)	194	17	86	298	1,380	294
Total	217	19	95	332	1,545	328
<b>New Case Filings (Fiscal Year 2024-25)</b>						
Appeal Filings	60	10	85	154	225	101
Civil Filings						
Civil	11,285	416	3,033	14,110	87,904	16,545
Family Law	4,004	253	1,507	5,236	25,019	5,261
Juvenile Delinquency	241	39	175	772	2,086	537
Juvenile Dependency	115	25	166	460	3,228	618
Mental Health	831	21	243	1,465	9,727	1,768
Probate	775	59	319	1,217	5,398	1,154
Small Claims	674	34	270	1,073	7,138	1,336
Criminal Filings						
Felonies	2,344	190	1,178	3,963	14,728	3,416
Misdemeanors / Infractions	44,387	4,367	21,538	67,371	263,930	60,803
Total	64,716	5,414	28,514	95,821	419,383	91,539

Source: Financial and case filings data maintained by the Judicial Council. The date ranges differ for the above information due to the different sources of data. The financial data is from the Judicial Council's Phoenix financial system, the judicial officer and staff counts are from the most recent Court Statistics Report, and the case filing counts are from the Judicial Branch Statistical Information System data as of December 18, 2025, and may not agree with other reports as this data is continuously updated.

Note: The Judicial Council generally groups superior courts into four clusters and uses these clusters, for example, when analyzing workload and allocating funding to courts. According to past Judicial Council documents, the cluster 1 courts are those superior courts with between 1.1 and 4 judicial position equivalents (JPEs), cluster 2 courts are those with between 4.1 and 20 JPEs, cluster 3 courts are those with between 20.1 and 59.9 JPEs, and cluster 4 courts are those with 60 or more JPEs. Solano Superior Court is a cluster 3 court.

**SCHEDULE OF AUDIT FINDINGS AND PLANNED CORRECTIVE ACTION**

## CASH HANDLING

### The Court Should Strengthen Its Controls Over Certain Payment Collection Processes

#### **Background**

Trial courts must collect and process customer payments in a manner that protects the integrity of the court and its employees, and promotes public confidence. Thus, trial courts should institute a system of internal control procedures that assure the safe and secure collection, and accurate accounting of all payments. A court's handling of collections is inherently a high-risk activity given the potential incentives for court employees to act inappropriately when mandatory internal controls per the Trial Court Financial Policies and Procedures Manual (FIN Manual) are compromised or not in operation.

#### **Results**

Overall, the Court demonstrated compliance in some of the areas we evaluated during the audit. Specifically, the Court demonstrated sound management practices in the areas of its void transactions and internet payments.

Nevertheless, we identified five audit findings that we believe require the Court's attention and corrective action. These findings pertained to the following specific areas of cash handling:

Finding Reference	Subject Area
2025-3-01	Manual Receipts – Monitoring and Accounting for Use
2025-6-01	Change Fund – Accountability
2025-7-01	End-of-Day Balancing and Closeout – Verification
2025-8-01	Bank Deposits – Prompt Deposit
2025-9-01	Other Internal Controls – Access to Safe

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**FINDING REFERENCE: 2025-3-01***MANUAL RECEIPTS – MONITORING AND ACCOUNTING FOR USE***CRITERIA**

FIN MANUAL, FIN 10.02, 6.3.9 MANUAL RECEIPTS:

5. Issuance of manual receipt books by trial court to court facility supervisor:
  - a. When the court facility supervisor receives the manual receipt books, the facility supervisor must record each book on a log for the facility.
  - b. The log must include the date received, book number, and receipt number sequence (from and to receipt numbers).
6. Issuance of manual receipt book by court facility supervisor or his or her designee to cashiers:
  - a. The supervisor or his or her designee must maintain control and oversight of the manual receipt books. When the cashiering system and/or case management system is not available to process automated receipts, the supervisor or designee will retrieve and issue books of prenumbered receipts to cashiers. Manual receipt books should only be used when the cashiering system and/or case management system is down.
  - b. The supervisor or his or her designee issuing the prenumbered manual receipt books must monitor and maintain an accounting of the receipt books, including:
    - i. The receipt books issued;
    - ii. To whom the receipt book was issued;
    - iii. The date issued;
    - iv. The name of the person returning the book;
    - v. The date the books were returned (should be the end of the same day); and
    - vi. The receipt numbers used within each book.

**CONDITION**

The Court's payment locations do not maintain a log to account for and monitor the manual receipt books they control. The FIN Manual requires court locations to maintain a log that includes the date the manual receipt books are received from Finance, the receipt book numbers, the receipt number sequence in each book, the date the completely used books are returned to Finance, and the name of the supervisor returning the books. According to court staff, the payment locations do not maintain such logs because Finance maintains the records related to the issuance of manual receipt books. Additionally, the Court's payment locations do not maintain a log to monitor and account for the locations' use of their manual receipt books. However, the FIN manual requires location supervisors to maintain control and oversight of the manual receipt books, and to monitor and maintain an accounting of each book issued, to whom the book was issued, the date issued, the person returning the book, the date returned, and the receipt numbers used. The lack of a manual receipt log is due, at least in part, to the Court's local desktop procedures not requiring the use and maintenance of a log to monitor and account for the locations' use of their manual receipt books. Furthermore, according to court staff, they were unaware of the FIN Manual requirement. Nonetheless, when courts do not monitor and maintain

an accounting of their manual receipt books, they are at increased risk that staff may use manual receipts inappropriately and possibly without clear accountability of who used the manual receipts.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Court should ensure its payment collection locations maintain control and oversight of their manual receipt books, including keeping an accurate inventory of all manual receipt books received and returned, and a detailed log to monitor and maintain an accounting of the receipts books and receipts numbers used.

### **COURT'S VIEW AND CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN**

The Court maintains a manual receipt books log in fiscal department only. However, we agree with the recommendation that all Court payment locations should maintain control and oversight of their manual receipt books. As such, we will amend the Manual Receipts Books Log by adding the Department Name or Court Payment Location on the header and editing the column headers as necessary, so that the Court will have a uniform log to be used by all locations. Additionally, a separate log sheet will be developed to record a list of receipt numbers used within each book to be used by all Court payment locations. The Cash Handling desktop procedure will be updated by adding all the changes stated above under section 3.8 of the procedure.

**Response provided on 06/30/2025 by:** Agnes Shappy, Chief Financial Officer

**Date of Corrective Action:** July 1, 2025

**Responsible Person(s):** Agnes Shappy, Chief Financial Officer; Sara MacCaughey, Assistant Chief Executive Officer

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**FINDING REFERENCE: 2025-6-01***CHANGE FUND – ACCOUNTABILITY***CRITERIA**

FIN MANUAL, FIN 10.02, 6.3.1 CASH CHANGE FUND:

7. At the end of each business day, individuals responsible for making change from the Cash Change Fund must—in the presence of a court manager, supervisor, or his or her designee—count, verify, and reconcile the Change Fund monies to the day’s beginning balance, and initial and date the verification/reconciliation.
8. A trial court employee, other than the individuals responsible for making change from the Cash Change Fund, should count the Cash Change Fund in accordance with the following schedule and report the count to the fiscal officer.

Size of Cash Change Fund	Frequency of Count
Less than \$200	Annually
\$200 to \$499.99	Quarterly
\$500 or more	Monthly

**CONDITION**

Although the Court currently maintains change funds ranging between \$200 and \$500 at its various payment locations and at the Fiscal division, it does not require individuals responsible for making change from the change funds to count and verify the change funds at the end of each day while in the presence of a manager or supervisor. Instead, we found that the change funds are counted only on days when the change funds are used, although one payment location also verifies its change fund in the morning. Also, we found that these counts and verifications are not documented with staff initials and the dates of the verifications. According to court staff, they were unaware of the FIN Manual requirement, and the Court’s written policies do not require the change fund to be counted and verified at the end of the day. However, the FIN Manual requires individuals responsible for making change from the change fund to count, verify, and reconcile the change fund in the presence of a manager or supervisor at the end of the day and document the reconciliation with the date and initials of the staff performing the count and verification. As a result, the Court’s current practice of not counting and verifying its change funds on a daily basis in the presence of two people as well as documenting the count and verification, as required by the FIN Manual, potentially allows a change fund shortage to occur without clear accountability of when the shortage may have occurred or who may have caused the shortage.

Furthermore, the Court does not require an individual who is not the change fund custodian to periodically count the change funds as frequently as suggested by the FIN Manual. Specifically, the various payment locations have change funds between \$200 and \$400, but someone other than the individuals responsible for making change from the change funds do not count and verify the change funds on a quarterly basis, as suggested by the FIN Manual. Instead, the Fiscal division performs the periodic counts sporadically, with time between counts ranging from about once a year to about once every five years. Additionally, the Fiscal division has a change fund of \$500; however, someone other than the individuals responsible for making change from the change fund does not count and verify the change fund on a monthly basis, as suggested by the

FIN Manual. Rather, accounting staff perform a random, undocumented audit of the Fiscal division's \$500 change fund twice a year. According to court management, they were unaware of the FIN Manual guidance, and they acknowledge that they haven't kept up with the periodic change fund cash counts. Nonetheless, the FIN Manual's suggestion that individuals other than those responsible for making change from the change funds verify these change funds on a periodic basis, based on the change fund amount, is meant to mitigate the risk that any potential shortage in its change funds could go undetected for an extended period of time.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

To reduce the risk of prolonged unaccountable change fund shortages or overages, the Court should:

- Ensure that individuals responsible for making change from the change funds count and verify the change fund at the end of each business day in the presence of a court manager, supervisor, or designee, as well as document the counts and verifications.
- Ensure that an individual, other than the individual responsible for making change from the change fund, counts and verifies its change fund at the frequency specified in the FIN Manual, as well as document the counts and verifications.

### **COURT'S VIEW AND CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN**

We agree with the recommendations stated above for the purpose of reducing the risk of prolonged unaccountable change fund shortages or overages. Accordingly, the Court will implement the following: 1) A Daily Change Fund Reconciliation form will be developed where the date and initials of both the Change Fund Custodian and the Supervisor or designee, and a statement from the custodian verifying the change fund in the presence of the supervisor or designee, will be indicated, to be used by all payment locations and fiscal department; 2) the change fund for fiscal will change from \$500 to \$490 (this has been implemented on 5/30/2025); and 3) a fiscal staff, who is not the designated change fund custodian and does not verify the daily change fund, will conduct an audit or verify the change fund for all payment locations including fiscal department on a quarterly basis. A separate form for this verification will be developed. Additionally, all these changes will be included in section 3.2 of the Cash Handling desktop procedure.

**Response provided on 06/30/2025 by:** Agnes Shappy, Chief Financial Officer

**Date of Corrective Action:** July 1, 2025

**Responsible Person(s):** Agnes Shappy, Chief Financial Officer

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**FINDING REFERENCE: 2025-7-01***END-OF-DAY BALANCING AND CLOSEOUT – VERIFICATION***CRITERIA**

FIN MANUAL, FIN 10.02, 6.3.10 DAILY BALANCING AND CLOSEOUT:

1. At the end of each workday, each cashier must balance the payments collected in his or her individual cash drawer/bag with the payments and collections recorded in the cashiering system and/or automated case management system. Cashiers may not leave the premises or transact new business until the daily balancing and closeout processes are complete.
2. The balancing and closeout process includes the following steps:
  - a. The cashier completes and signs the recap of daily collections report; attaches a calculator tape for checks; and submits the report, collections, and beginning cash to the supervisor or his or her designee for verification;
  - b. The supervisor or his or her designee verifies in the presence of the cashier that the beginning cash is fully accounted for and the submitted collections balance with the recap of daily collections report;
  - c. The supervisor or his or her designee then verifies that the submitted collections balance with the associated payments and collections reported on the cashier's case management system daily collections closeout report;
  - d. If the collections balance with the amounts in the case management system, the cashier and supervisor or his or her designee must both sign and date the case management system daily collections closeout report.

**CONDITION**

The Court's end-of-day closeout process at the Civil, Family Law, and Traffic and Criminal payment locations in Fairfield do not fully comply with either the Court's desktop procedures or FIN Manual requirements. Specifically, at all three payment locations, neither the cashiers nor the designated lead or supervisor sign and date the closeout reports to indicate agreement of the collections. Additionally, at the Family Law and Civil payment locations in Fairfield, a designated supervisor does not count and verify each cashier's end-of-day collections to the CMS daily closeout reports while the cashier is present. Instead, these locations' supervisors only verify the cash collections in front of the cashier, and not the checks and other negotiable instruments. According to court staff, the payment locations' procedure is for the clerk to sign the beginning cash log at opening, and for the supervisor or lead to sign the beginning cash log at closing and send both the till reports and the final reconciliation report to Fiscal. Additionally, tills are balanced and closed in the CMS with closeout reports only initialed by court staff if cash payments are collected. Nonetheless, both the Court's desktop procedures and the FIN Manual require a designated supervisor or lead to count and verify each cashier's end-of-day collections to their collections recap forms and to the CMS daily closeout reports while the cashiers are present. The desktop procedures and FIN Manual also require both the cashier and the designated supervisor to sign and date the closeout report to indicate agreement of the

collections. Adhering to the daily closeout requirements outlined in the FIN Manual helps protect the integrity of both the Court and all its cash handling employees.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

To better safeguard its funds and ensure clear accountability for cashier shortages and overages, the Court should require a designated supervisor or lead to count and verify each cashier's end-of-day collections to the CMS daily closeout reports in the presence of the cashier and require both the cashier and supervisor or lead to sign and date the closeout documentation to indicate verification that the collections balance with the case management system.

### **COURT'S VIEW AND CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN**

The Court currently has a desktop procedure for Daily Balancing and Closeout, however it is not fully complied consistently by all payment locations. Additionally, the desktop procedure needs to be modified in terms of the timing in implementing step 2.d of the criteria stated above that says, "If the collections balance with the amounts in the case management system, the cashier and supervisor or his or her designee must both sign and date the case management system daily collections closeout report". Accordingly, we will revise the "Daily Deposit Reconciliation Form" that Cashiers and Supervisors are using for all payment locations by adding a section for Cashier's name, initials and date, and to add a statement that the Lead/Supervisor verifies all collections in the presence of the Cashier. To add a layer of certainty that all payment locations comply with the procedure, the fiscal staff who is assigned to verify daily deposits shall review the "Daily Deposit Reconciliation Form" to make sure it is initialed and dated by both Cashier and Lead/Supervisor.

**Response provided on 06/30/2025 by:** Agnes Shappy, Chief Financial Officer

**Date of Corrective Action:** July 1, 2025

**Responsible Person(s):** Agnes Shappy, Chief Financial Officer; Sara MacCaughey, Assistant Chief Executive Officer

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**FINDING REFERENCE: 2025-8-01*****BANK DEPOSITS – PROMPT DEPOSIT*****CRITERIA**

FIN MANUAL, FIN 13.01, 6.4 DEPOSITS:

3. Courts are required to deposit receipts in a timely and economical manner. Courts must adhere to the following guidelines in determining when to deposit receipts into an appropriate court-approved bank account.
  - a. All court locations that have safes, vaults, or other comparable storage that is adequate to safeguard cash may accumulate collections until they amount to \$1,000 in coin/paper currency or \$10,000 in any combination of coin/paper currency, checks, money orders, and warrants (excluding state warrants and state checks), whichever occurs first.
  - c. Accumulated coin/paper currency, checks, money orders, and warrants of any amount will not remain undeposited for more than 10 working days. A court may deposit more often than once a day at its discretion and when it is economical or practical to do so because of the amount of its receipts.

FIN MANUAL, FIN 1.01, 6.4 TRIAL COURT OPERATING STANDARDS:

4. A presiding judge or his/her designee who wants to establish an alternative procedure will submit a signed and dated Request for Alternative Procedure Form (copy provided in 7.0, Associated Documents) to:

Judicial Council of California  
Director of Branch Accounting and Procurement  
Attn.: Trial Court Alternative Financial Policies and Procedures  
2850 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 300  
Sacramento, CA 95833-4348  
E-mail: [TCFin@jud.ca.gov](mailto:TCFin@jud.ca.gov)

A written response to the submission of alternative procedures will be returned to the submitting court within 60 business days of receipt of the document. When a Request for Alternative Procedure has been received by Judicial Council of California Staff, an acknowledgement of receipt will be returned to the submitting court. The 60 business-day response time will begin once the court receives that acknowledgement of receipt. Absent a response from Judicial Council of California Staff within 60 business-days, the alternative procedure will be in effect, subject to further review and consideration by Judicial Council of California Staff. Undocumented procedures or those not approved by Judicial Council of California Staff will not be considered valid for audit purposes.

Once approved, alternative procedures must be documented by the trial court, incorporated into the local trial court manual, and distributed to court personnel. Any alternative procedure that is different from what is included in the Trial Court Financial Policies and Procedures Manual, or the county's policy document must first be approved by Judicial Council of California Staff.

**CONDITION**

The Court does not promptly deposit its collections in the bank. Specifically, the Court's Fiscal division deposits its collections three times per week even though the accumulated cash, checks, money orders, and other negotiable instruments held without deposit consistently exceeds \$10,000. For example, our review of five deposits the Court made over a two-week period in April 2025 found deposit amounts ranging between \$11,000 and \$422,000. According to court management, the cost of daily armored car services is not economically feasible, and the Court has had trouble contracting with vendors that provide armored care services. Nonetheless, the FIN Manual requires courts to deposit collections when they exceed \$1,000 in cash or \$10,000 in cash and checks. By not making deposits when required, the Court leaves itself at increased risk for the loss or theft of significant amounts of cash and other collections.

**RECOMMENDATION**

To minimize the potential risk of the loss or theft of large amounts of cash, the Court should promptly deposit cash collections into the bank when they reach \$1,000, or when any combination of cash and checks reaches \$10,000. If the Court believes it is not economically or practically feasible to do so, it should request approval from the Judicial Council for an alternative procedure that mitigates the potential risk created by not following the FIN Manual requirement for promptly depositing collections as specified in the FIN Manual.

**COURT'S VIEW AND CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN**

The Court's current contract for armored-car service for pick-up/drop-off deposit is on a three-times weekly basis, thus depositing collections for the Court is limited to every-other-day only where collections are kept in a safe while waiting to be picked up. However, we recognize that the Court's collection may exceed \$10,000 daily, therefore we agree that deposits must be made daily. Accordingly, we have amended our contract with the armored-car service provider by changing the frequency for pick-up/drop-off services from three times daily to daily (Monday through Friday) for effective July 1, 2025. The Amendment to the Agreement has been fully executed.

**Response provided on 06/30/2025 by:** Agnes Shappy, Chief Financial Officer

**Date of Corrective Action:** July 1, 2025

**Responsible Person(s):** Agnes Shappy, Chief Financial Officer

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**FINDING REFERENCE: 2025-9-01*****OTHER INTERNAL CONTROLS – ACCESS TO SAFE*****CRITERIA**

FIN MANUAL, FIN 10.02, 6.1.1 USE OF SAFES AND VAULTS:

3. When using safes and vaults, the following procedures must be followed:
  - b. The combination should be memorized by trial court employees and should not be kept in legible form. If necessary to maintain the combination in legible form, it should not be kept in any written or electronic document that identifies it as the combination to the safe and should be maintained in a secure location not visible or accessible to anyone else. Only the court executive officer or the court executive officer's designee is approved to maintain the combination to the safe in legible form that identifies it as such.
  - d. The court executive officer or his or her designee will maintain a record showing the following information:
    - i. The date the combination was last changed; and
    - ii. The names of persons knowing the current combination.

**CONDITION**

The Court does not take adequate precautions to safeguard the contents of the safes maintained by the payment locations. Specifically, for the Fiscal division and all four payment locations reviewed, court staff with access to the safes maintain the safe combinations in legible form. Additionally, the Court does not have documentation stating that the Court Executive Officer (CEO) had approved court staff at the Fiscal division and various payment locations as designees, who are the only ones allowed to maintain the combinations in legible form. Furthermore, at the Fiscal division, we observed one court staff member who left their written safe combination unsecured, on top of their desk. According to court management, they were unaware of these FIN Manual requirements. Nonetheless, the FIN Manual states that if it is necessary to maintain the combination in legible form, it should not be kept in any document that identifies it as the combination to the safe, and only the CEO or designee is approved to maintain the combination in a legible form that identifies it as such. As a result, the Court is at increased risk of theft of cash and other payments, potentially without clear accountability of who may have taken payments from the safe.

**RECOMMENDATION**

To ensure it properly safeguards the contents of its safe, the Court should remind staff to memorize the combination to the safe and not keep the safe combination in legible form, except as allowed by the FIN Manual. If it is necessary to maintain the combination in legible form, only the CEO or designee should be allowed to maintain the safe combination in legible form that identifies it as such in a secure location not visible or accessible to anyone else.

**COURT'S VIEW AND CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN**

We agree with the recommendation that the Court should remind staff to memorize the combination to the safe and not keep the safe combination in legible form. Accordingly, a

memorandum will be sent to all Managers, Supervisors and Fiscal staff reiterating the FIN requirement in using and accessing safe. The Court will continue to designate the Operations Manager – Business Facilities to maintain a record of the safe combination information for all Court payment locations. Likewise, the Operations Manager – Business Facilities will review, update and provide the respective Manager an updated list of persons knowing the current combination for each department respectively.

**Response provided on 06/30/2025 by:** Agnes Shappy, Chief Financial Officer

**Date of Corrective Action:** July 1, 2025

**Responsible Person(s):** Agnes Shappy, Chief Financial Officer; Judy Walker, Operations Manager – Business Facilities and Jury Services

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## **PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTS**

### ***Background***

Trial courts are expected to procure goods and services in a manner that promotes competition and ensures best value. To achieve this expectation, the Judicial Branch Contracting Manual (JBCM) and the Trial Court Financial Policies and Procedures Manual provide uniform guidelines for trial courts to use in procuring necessary goods and services and in documenting their procurement practices. Trial courts must demonstrate that their procurement of goods and services are conducted economically and expeditiously, under fair and open competition, and in accordance with sound procurement practice. Typically, a purchase requisition is used to initiate all procurement actions and to document approval of the procurement by an authorized individual. The requestor identifies the goods or services, verifies that budgeted funds are available for the purchase, completes the requisition form, and forwards it to the court manager authorized to approve purchase requests. The court manager is responsible for verifying the necessity and appropriateness of the requested items, that the correct account codes are specified and assuring that funds are available before approving and forwarding the requisition form to the staff responsible for procuring goods and services. Depending on the type, cost, and frequency of the goods or services to be procured, court staff responsible for procuring goods and services may need to perform varying degrees of procurement research to generate an appropriate level of competition and obtain the best value. Court procurement staff may need to also prepare and enter the agreed-upon terms and conditions into purchase orders, service agreements, or contracts to document the terms and conditions of the procurement transaction, and maintain a procurement file that fully documents the procurement transaction.

### ***Results***

During the fieldwork phase for the audit, the Court informed Audit Services that the California State Auditor (CSA) had initiated a statutorily required audit, pursuant to Public Contract Code §19210, of the Court's procurement policies and practices. Therefore, to not duplicate audit efforts, we did not review its procurement policies and practices. CSA Report 2025-302, *Judicial Branch Procurement*, was released on January 8, 2026, and had no written findings pertaining to the Court.

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## **PAYMENT PROCESSING**

### **The Court Generally Complied with Applicable Travel Expense Claim and Business-Related Meal Expense Requirements**

#### ***Background***

Trial courts must institute procedures and internal controls to ensure they pay for appropriate goods and services in an economical and responsible manner, ensuring that they receive acceptable goods and services prior to payment. Thus, the FIN Manual provides courts with various policies on payment processing and provides uniform guidelines for processing vendor invoices and in-court service provider claims. All invoices and claims received from trial court vendors, suppliers, consultants and other contractors are routed to the trial court accounts payable department for processing. The accounts payable staff must process the invoices in a timely fashion and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the respective agreements. Staff must match all invoices to the proper supporting procurement and receipt documentation, and must ensure approval for payment is authorized by court management acting within the scope of their authority.

In addition, trial court judges and employees may be required to travel as part of their official duties, and may occasionally conduct official court business during a meal period. Courts may reimburse their judges and employees for their reasonable and necessary travel expenses, within certain maximum limits, incurred while traveling on court business. Courts may also reimburse their judges and employees, or pay vendors, for the actual cost of providing business-related meals when certain rules and limits are met.

#### ***Results***

During the fieldwork phase for the audit, the Court informed Audit Services that the California State Auditor (CSA) had initiated a statutorily required audit, pursuant to Public Contract Code §19210, of the Court's accounts payable policies and practices. Therefore, to not duplicate audit efforts, we did not review its accounts payable policies and practices, with the exception of travel expense claims and business-related meal expenses. CSA Report 2025-302, *Judicial Branch Procurement*, was released on January 8, 2026, and had no written findings pertaining to the Court.

Our review found that the Court generally complied with applicable requirements in the payment processing areas we evaluated during our audit. Specifically, the Court demonstrated general compliance with travel expense claims and business-related meal expense requirements.

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## **FUND BALANCE**

### **The Court Appropriately Supported Its Year-End Encumbrances**

#### ***Background***

State law allows trial courts to retain unexpended fund balance reserves in an amount that does not exceed a defined percentage of a court's prior fiscal year operating budget. Operating budget is defined as the court's total expenditures from all funds (excluding fiduciary funds) that are expended for operating the court. Certain types of funds received by the court and restricted for certain purposes—as specifically designated in statute, and including year-end encumbrances—are exempt from this requirement. The intent of the legislation was to prevent trial courts from accumulating significant fund balances instead of spending the funds on court operations. Audit Services reviews year-end encumbrances to ensure courts do not inflate their calculated fund balance caps by overstating total year-end encumbrance amounts for the current fiscal year, avoiding any required reductions in their budget allocation.

In addition, should a court need to retain funds that exceed its fund balance cap, the Judicial Council adopted a process whereby courts that meet certain specified guidelines may request approval from the Judicial Council to hold excess funds “on behalf of the court.” The request specifies how the funds will be used and requires the court to explain why such spending could not occur through its annual operating budget. If the Judicial Council approves the court's request, the Judicial Council may impose additional terms and conditions that courts must accept, including separately tracking the expenditures associated with these funds held on behalf of the court. As a part of the Judicial Council-approved process for approving funds held on behalf of a court, Audit Service is charged with reviewing funds held on behalf of the courts as a part of its normal court audit cycle to confirm that the courts used the funds for their approved stated purpose.

#### ***Results***

Our review found that the Court complied with the requirements for reporting year-end encumbrances. Specifically, the Court supported the encumbrances it reported on its final FY 2023-24 calculation form with valid contracts for goods or services not received by June 30, 2024. Finally, we did not review its use of any excess funds because the Court has not requested the Judicial Council to hold any such funds on its behalf.

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## **JBSIS CASE FILING DATA**

### **The Court Should Ensure It Reports Accurate Filing Counts and Data to JBSIS**

#### ***Background***

The Judicial Branch Statistical Information System (JBSIS) is a reporting system that defines and electronically collects summary information from court case management systems for each major case processing area of the court. JBSIS directly supports the technology goals of the Judicial Council's strategic plan, providing information for judicial branch policy and budgetary decisions, management reports for court administrators, and the Judicial Council's legislative mandate to report on the business of the courts. Authorization for JBSIS is found in California Rules of Court, rule 10.400: "Consistent with article VI, section 6 of the California Constitution and Government Code section 68505, JBSIS is established by the Judicial Council to provide accurate, consistent, and timely information for the judicial branch, the Legislature, and other state agencies that require information from the courts to fulfill their mandates. Each trial court must collect and report to the Judicial Council information according to its capability and level of automation as prescribed by the JBSIS Manual adopted by the Judicial Council..." The Court Executives Advisory Committee is responsible for oversight of this program.

#### ***Results***

Our review found that the Court maintained documentation to support the JBSIS case filings data it submitted to the Office of Court Research. Nevertheless, our review identified one JBSIS related audit finding that we believe requires the Court's continuous monitoring. This finding pertained to the following specific area of the JBSIS case filings data:

<b>Finding Reference</b>	<b>Subject Area</b>
2025-29-01	Case Filing Counts and Categories

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**FINDING REFERENCE: 2025-29-01***JBSIS DATA QUALITY – CASE FILING COUNTS AND DATA***CRITERIA**

CALIFORNIA RULES OF COURT, RULE 10.400, JUDICIAL BRANCH STATISTICAL INFORMATION SYSTEM:

Consistent with article VI, section 6 of the California Constitution and Government Code section 68505, the Judicial Branch Statistical Information System (JBSIS) is established by the Judicial Council to provide accurate, consistent, and timely information for the judicial branch... Each trial court must collect and report to the Judicial Council information according to its capability and level of automation as prescribed by the *JBSIS Manual* adopted by the Judicial Council.

JUDICIAL BRANCH STATISTICAL INFORMATION SYSTEM MANUAL – VERSION 3.0, APPENDIX H—DATA QUALITY ASSURANCE:

Error Quantification and Acceptable Error Rates

The error rate is determined by the difference of the reported value and the correct value, divided by the reported value. The magnitude of the error relative to the number of filings in a given period affected determines how courts should remedy the error. The JBSIS subcommittee determined that a 2% error rate met the criteria of being rigorous enough to ensure high data quality without posing an undue burden for courts.

The committee determined that an error rate of 2% or more in any one data element for a specific case type or cumulative across case types for one data element—limited at this time to filings, dispositions, trials, and time to disposition, when reported—should be established as the threshold above which courts must submit amended data correcting the report and that amended reports to resolve the error must be submitted within 60 days of error discovery.

**CONDITION**

Although the Court reported to JBSIS a materially accurate total count of 52,113 new case filings in fiscal year 2023-24, the counts of individual case types did not always materially agree to the number of filings supported by case type reports. Audit Services reviewed the underlying court records supporting its reported case counts for fiscal year 2023-24 and found one variance greater than 2% for a RAS case category. Specifically, 09a Juvenile Dependency was underreported by 6.10%. According to the Court, it has been unable to correct its case filing count submission in JBSIS and has not reached out to the Judicial Council of California's Research, Analytics and Data Office for assistance.

Additionally, our review of selected case file records associated with its fiscal year 2023-24 JBSIS case filings data found that the Court incorrectly reported the filing date for seven of the 60 cases reviewed. Specifically, the filing date recorded in the Court's CMS does not agree to the supporting documentation. For example, the filing date noted in the CMS for one 05b Unlimited Civil case was August 30, 2023, when the supporting documentation shows a filing date of August 25, 2023. For one 06a Family Law - Child Support case and five 09a Juvenile Dependency cases, the CMS filing dates also did not agree with the supporting documentation. According to the Court, the incorrect filing dates for the 05b Unlimited Civil and 06a Family Law - Child Support cases were due to clerical error. For the five 09a Juvenile Dependency

cases, the incorrect filing dates in the CMS are due to the Court's process of initiating the cases in CMS prior to the filing forms being submitted to the Court in order to schedule a hearing and produce a case number for Child Welfare Services.

Furthermore, we found the Court reported one 07c Felony case under the incorrect case type data element. Specifically, the Court reported a Felony Fugitive Warrant/Extradition (Penal Code §1551.1) petition as portal 05 - Felony in JBSIS; however, according to the JBSIS Manual data element definitions for the case type, the petition should have been reported as portal 95 - Miscellaneous Criminal Petition. According to the Court, there was a setup issue in the CMS with the Felony-Fugitive Warrant/Extradition filings, and the Court will correct the filings in the CMS. Nonetheless, when courts do not classify and report case filings correctly, not only may the Judicial Council report flawed JBSIS case filings data to internal and external stakeholders, it may also use filings data that can negatively affect the annual budget allocations of both the Court and/or other superior courts.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

To ensure it is doing all it reasonably can to ensure accurate and complete JBSIS reporting, the Court should do the following:

- Resubmit updated case filings data to JBSIS for fiscal year 2023-24 via an amended report.
- Provide training to clarify for staff certain JBSIS case type definitions and the required case file records.

### **COURT'S VIEW AND CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN**

Agree.

In line with the recommendations outlined in the recent audit, the Court contacted the Office of Court Research (OCR) on August 1, 2025, to inquire about the possibility of resubmitting amended reports. OCR responded that the deadline to submit amended data for Fiscal Year 23/24 was December 10, 2024, and any changes submitted after that date would not be reflected in the annual Court Statistics Report (CSR). However, they advised that if data discrepancies were identified, the Court should submit a memorandum outlining the corrections. Accordingly, on August 1, 2025, the Court submitted a memo to OCR identifying the discrepancies found during the audit and formally requested that they be corrected. On August 4, 2025, the OCR approved the amendment, and the 09a report for August 2023 was updated to accurately reflect 16 new filings.

Lastly, the court will conduct trainings in August 2025 for each case type in which filing count errors were identified.

**Response provided on 08/04/2025 by:** Sara MacCaughey, Assistant Chief Executive Officer

**Date of Corrective Action:** August 4, 2025

**Responsible Person(s):** Sara MacCaughey, Assistant Chief Executive Officer

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## APPENDIX – AUDIT SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

Audit Services initiated an audit of the Superior Court of California, County of Solano (Court) in order to determine whether it complied with certain key provisions of statute and the policies and procedures adopted by the Judicial Council of California, such as such as those contained within the Trial Court Financial Policies and Procedures Manual (FIN Manual) and the Judicial Branch Contracting Manual (JBCM). Our audit was limited to evaluating compliance with those requirements that, in our professional judgment, were necessary to answer the audit’s objectives. The period covered by this audit was generally limited to fiscal year (FY) 2023-24, but certain compliance areas noted below required that we review earlier periods or current practices. Table A-1 lists the specific audit objectives and the methods we used to address them.

Table A-1 – Audit Objectives and the Methods Used to Address Them

	<b>Audit Objective</b>	<b>Method</b>
1	Through inquiry, auditor observation, and review of local court policies and procedures, identify areas of high risk to evaluate the Court’s compliance.	Audit Services developed an annual audit plan generally identifying areas of high risk at the superior courts. At the Court, we made inquiries and reviewed any local procedures to further understand its unique processes in each compliance area.
2	<p>Determine whether the Court implemented adequate internal controls over its handling of cash receipts and other payments. Such a review will include, at a minimum, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Determine whether the Court complied with the mandatory requirements in the FIN manual for internal controls over cash (payment) handling.</li> <li>▪ Assess the quality of the Court’s internal controls to minimize the potential for theft, such as controls over the use of manual receipts and voided transactions.</li> </ul>	We obtained information from the Court regarding the types and average volume of collections at each of its payment collection locations. For selected locations, we observed the Court’s practice for safeguarding and accounting for cash and other forms of payments from the public. For example, we reviewed and observed the Court’s practice for appropriately segregating incompatible duties, assigning cash drawers to cashiers at the beginning of the day, reviewing and approving void transactions, safeguarding and accounting for manual receipts, opening and processing mail payments, controlling access to change funds, overseeing the end-of-day balancing and closeout process, and preparing and accounting for the daily bank deposits.

<p>3</p>	<p>Determine whether the Court demonstrated appropriate control over its non-personal services spending activities. Specifically, our review included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Determine whether the Court’s procurement transactions complied with the applicable requirements in the Judicial Branch Contracting Manual or the Trial Court Financial Policies and Procedures Manual.</li> <li>▪ Determine whether the Court’s payment transactions—including but not limited to vendor payments and claim payments—were reasonable and in compliance with the Trial Court Financial Policies and Procedures Manual and applicable Judicial Council policies and rules.</li> </ul>	<p>During the fieldwork phase for the audit, the Court informed Audit Services that the California State Auditor had initiated a statutorily required audit, pursuant to Public Contract Code §19210, of the Court’s procurement and accounts payable policies and practices. Therefore, to not duplicate audit efforts, we did not review its procurement and accounts payable policies and practices, with the exception of travel expense claims and business-related meal expenses.</p> <p>We selected a sample of 10 travel expense claims and 10 business-related meal expenses in FY 2023-24, and determined whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate court staff authorized payment.</li> <li>• The payment reasonably represented an allowable “court operations” cost per Rule of Court, Rule 10.810.</li> <li>• The payments for travel expense claims and business meals adhered to applicable Judicial Council policies.</li> </ul>
<p>4</p>	<p>Determine whether the Court properly classified its year-end encumbrances for the most recent completed fiscal year.</p> <p>Determine whether the Court spent any funds the Judicial Council approved the Court to hold from prior year excess fund balance funds only for the purposes approved by the Judicial Council.</p>	<p>We obtained the Court’s Year-End Encumbrance Calculation Worksheet for the most recently completed fiscal year at the time of our testing (FY 2023-24) and traced and verified year-end encumbrances to supporting records and the Phoenix accounting system.</p> <p>The Court has not requested to hold any funds on its behalf in either the current or the previous fiscal year. As a result, no further review was deemed necessary.</p>

5	Determine whether the Court accurately reports case filings data to the Judicial Council through the Judicial Branch Statistics Information System (JBSIS).	<p>We obtained an understanding of the Court’s process for reporting case filings data to the Judicial Council through JBSIS. For the most recent fiscal year for which the Judicial Council froze and used JBSIS data for funding allocations (FY 2023-24), we performed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtained the relevant case filings data the Court reported to JBSIS and reconciled the reported new case filings counts to its underlying records of cases that support each reported case filing count, by case type, to validate that the Court accurately reported its case filings count data.</li> <li>• We selected 10 cases from six case types, for a total of 60 reported cases, and reviewed the relevant case file records to verify that the Court correctly applied the JBSIS definitions for reporting each case filing.</li> </ul>
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### **Assessment of Data Reliability**

We obtained financial transaction data from the statewide accounting system used by the superior courts for the limited purpose of selecting transactions to test. We reconciled the data with the Court’s total expenditures as noted on its trial balance report for the same period. Our analysis noted no material differences, leading us to conclude that use of the financial transaction data was sufficiently reliable for the limited purpose of selecting transactions for testing.